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sidered just as essential to the welfare of the school that theme readers be assigned to help high school English teachers as it is today to supply laboratory facilities for the study of the sciences. And until some such assistance is given to the English teachers, I am afraid that the complaints of colleges and business men will continue to be justified to a great extent.

These three problems—the need of making the composition work worthwhile to the student, the lack of the proper foundation in the mechanics of writing shown by pupils entering the high school, and the need of more time for correcting themes—seems to me to be the most pressing problems for the teachers of written composition today.

## SUPERVISED STUDY IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

By THOS. H. FRANKS

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IN THE FALL of 1920 our school was organized on the 6-3-3 plan. The main purpose in putting in the junior high school was to help the students to make the transfer from the grammar grades to the difficult first year of high school. There were not enough students here to justify the organization of a junior high school which would aim to provide for vocational guidance or to furnish different kinds of training for different classes of students. It was hoped that the organization of the junior high school would help the pupils to start safely through the high school; that it would help the students to take up Latin or Algebra or other high school subjects with more prospect of passing them.

The plan did not work the first year. There were more failures in the first and second year junior high school classes than there had usually been in the old eighth or first year high school class. There were several causes for the large number of failures. Some of the causes lay in the organization itself, defects which were apparent before the year was half over. Probably the chief cause of the failures was that a large percentage of the students were not sufficiently well prepared for the work of the classes into which they were placed.

In the fall of 1921 the junior high school organization was changed in four important particulars. First, the students in the upper third of the sixth grade of last year were promoted to the second year of the junior high school, or 8B grade as we more frequently call it. All the other sixth grade students went to the first year of the junior high school, or the 7th grade. The nine students who were jumped from the sixth to the 8B grade are making higher averages than the remainder of the class. It is expected that these pupils will hold their own through the high school. This makes it possible for these students who were promoted from the 6th to the 8B grade to complete the school here in eleven years instead of twelve. Inci-

dentally this is helping us to get better work out of many of the sixth grade students this year. A large percentage of the students want to be in the upper third of their class.

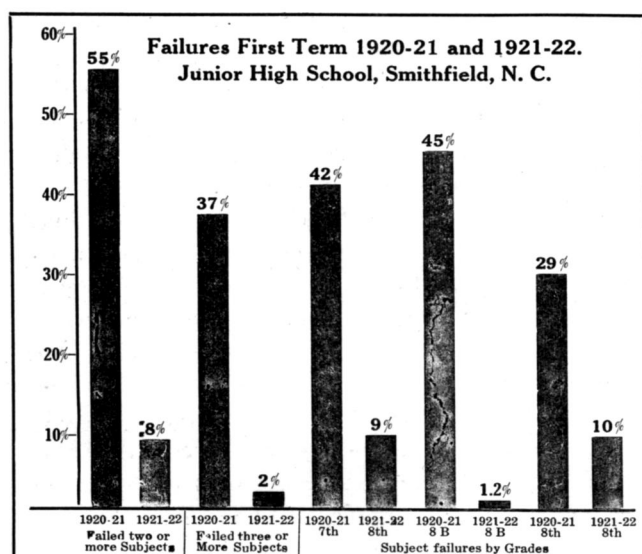
The second change in the organization was to provide for more study time at school. Instead of 7 forty-five minute periods 8 forty minute periods were substituted. This increased the school day twenty-five minutes, decreased slightly the time devoted to recitation, and increased the time for the preparation of lessons. It is difficult to get a large number of students to do any satisfactory work out of school. This change made it possible for us to get more work out of them, and under more favorable conditions than they would otherwise have. This second change has proved to be very desirable.

The third improvement was to put in charge of these three junior high school classes, 7th, 8B, and 8th, as strong teachers as we could secure, and teachers whose previous experience fitted them for doing the work that needed to be done in these grades. Results so far have amply proved the wisdom of the selections made. One of the teachers came from the grammar grades in this school, another had done grammar grade work here and then high school work, and the third had done considerable work in coaching both high school students and college students. These teachers were given the most vital subjects, mathematics and English, in their respective grades, and had charge of enough of the study periods so that these teachers were in a very real sense responsible for putting their grades across. In the 8th grade the Latin teacher was provided a supervised study period.

The fourth and big change made in the junior high school organization was provision for real supervised study periods. By supervised study periods is not meant the kind of study period in which the teacher simply keeps the room quiet, if she can, while she corrects papers or writes letters, helping only those

who are sufficiently interested to come to her for help. First of all part of the studies were agreed upon for preparation under the supervision of the teacher, and part were agreed upon for preparation at home or for part preparation at home. This helped to do away with the too frequent practice on the part of the students of taking home an armful of books. This method assured sufficient time for the preparation of the more difficult subjects, for these more difficult lessons were prepared in the room under the supervision of the teacher. This method also helped to do away with the habit of copying outside written work. If the student needed help, the teacher gave him the sort of help that he needed, but did not actually do the work for him, as was often the case, when the help was secured outside. Lessons in literature, history, civics, etc., were assigned for preparation at home. These lessons could be prepared by the students without much help other than the help at the time the lesson was assigned.

When the math study period came, every student in the class got out his math book and worked on his math lesson. Under the old method of study periods, if a pupil found the math lesson too hard, he put it aside and did nothing, or else got some easier lesson. This is nothing new, of course, to grammar grade teachers. Under this plan some pupils who have heretofore been regarded as deficient in math ability have turned out to be good average math students. The same plan was followed in the preparation of all lessons which were supposed to be prepared in the classroom.



This plan was not simply put on paper, but was carried out entirely as here recorded. It has worked, even beyond our expectations. The first term last

year in the three classes of the junior high school 49 of the 88 pupils, 55 per cent, failed on two or more subjects; this year 8 of 103 pupils, not quite 8 per cent, failed on two or more subjects. Last year 33 of 88 pupils, 37 per cent, failed the first term on three or more subjects; this year there were only two students in the 103 who failed on three or more subjects. Last year the subject failures for the three grades was 38 per cent; this year it was 7 per cent. In the 7th grade last year the failures amounted to 42 per cent; this year it was 9 per cent. In the 8B grade last year the failures amounted to 45 per cent, and the failures this year to only 1.2 per cent. In the 8th grade it was 29 per cent and 10 per cent last year and this year.

Because of unsatisfactory work last year the 9th grade was in rather bad condition for work this year, and therefore this grade, too, was put under supervised study for this year in the same way as were the three junior high school classes. The results here were good. Failures in this class have been reduced from 22 per cent. last year to 9 per cent. this year. The number in the 9th grade last year was 15; this year there were 33 at the end of the term.

## HUMAN AND MATERIAL WASTE

EVERY IDLER, every unskilled laborer, farmer, housekeeper, every unqualified preacher, teacher, doctor, lawyer, and every other incompetent workman in every other human endeavor, remind us most forcibly of lost opportunity and of spiritual and material waste. Most of our troubles are fundamental; they begin in the individual.

Therefore, a lofty, sane and democratic effort in the interest of universal development fundamentally concerns the training of every child in the land for a patriotic and efficient service. The responsibility of training the child falls heavily, too heavily, upon the school, America's inherent and universal worker for life and freedom. Childhood shows us the way to a greater Commonwealth.

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Our government, founded upon the consent of the governed, demands that our school system offer efficient training for workers in all of these and all other honorable human endeavors. We pledge ourselves to support a school policy that recognizes the inalienable educational rights of every child—to a school policy that will vitalize the courses of study and offer each individual an opportunity to prepare for his chosen work, and for spiritual and intellectual freedom. The school of tomorrow must be culturalized, socialized, industrialized, vocationalized, and democratized.—From Kentucky's *Declaration of Principles and Aims*, 1913.